

been amended to incorporate the limitations of amended claim 16. Claim 1 and claim 16 are substantially similar. However, claim 1 contains alternative references points to specific elements in the specification that appear in both figure 1 and in figure 3 or figure 4.

The amendment to each of claims 12-13 and 18 is supported by the underlying claim.

2. Claim Objections and Indefiniteness Rejections

The claim objections as well as the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, have been addressed or rendered moot by the claim amendments set forth above in the Listing of Claims.

3. The Chan et al. Prior Art

The invention as discussed during the interview pertains to an apparatus having a cleansing agent addition unit that holds a cleansing agent. The cleansing agent is distributed from the addition unit by a wash liquid having a dissolved cleansing agent in the wash liquid entering the addition unit. The wash liquid entering the addition unit is drawn from wash liquid circuits and is not drawn directly from a fresh water source.

The Chan et al. reference in contrast only uses a fresh water supply (Chan et al., figure 1, element 119) in providing a fluid for dissolving the detergent (Chan et al., figure 1, element 114) in the apparatus disclosed by figure 1 and described

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at column 5, lines 6-10. Chan et al. does not disclose or suggest a cleansing agent addition unit in which a cleansing agent is distributed from the addition unit by a wash liquid having a dissolved cleansing agent in the wash liquid entering the addition unit. Furthermore, Chan et al. does not disclose or suggest using a wash liquid delivered to an addition unit through wash liquid circuits wherein the wash liquid has dissolved cleansing agent present in the liquid as it enters an addition unit.

The other prior art rejections under 35 U.S.C § 102 and 103 set forth in the Office Action mailed July 11, 2007, have been rendered moot by the claim amendments set forth above in the Listing of Claims as claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 16, and claims 4 and 8-15 all depend from amended claim 1.

Claims 18 and 19 are drawn to a method of use associated with claims 1 or 16 and as such are also novel and nonobvious. Applicants traverse the restriction of these claims as drawn to a non-elected invention. However, in the interests of expediting prosecution of the remaining claims under examination, upon an indication of allowable subject matter, Applicants will agree to cancel claims 18 and 19 in the interest of advancing the prosecution of this application to an allowance.


The pending claims claim a novel and unobvious invention for which patent protection is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

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